

FOOL'S HAVEN. By C. C. Cawley. (Pp. 210. \$2.75.). Boston, Mass. : House of Edinboro. 1953.

THIS is a crusading novel by a former U.S. Army engineer and is concerned with a problem perhaps not so important here as in the United States, but one which the reviewer has encountered once. Laid in a technical college in Pasadena in 1930, it is concerned with a description of what happens when a self-appointed minister counsels against medical attention for the daughter of one of his followers, practises faith-healing and the girl dies from appendicitis. The legal anomaly against which the author protests is that the parent who denies the child medical aid can be punished, yet the pastor who counsels that denial goes free.

In general, when an author writes a crusading novel, it is poorer literature than when he is less concerned to right the wrongs of mankind. Mr. Cawley's novel is not great literature, the characters do not come to life and the book, apart from a rapidly developing love affair between the narrator and the victim, a girl of 17 years, is concerned mainly with the illness of the girl and her brother, the stubborn faith of the widowed mother and the advice of her pastor.

There can be no doubt that the book poses a problem. When those legally responsible for their own actions refuse medical treatment their conduct is sometimes most vexatious and that of their spiritual advisers may seem to be even more so. The children of persons so misguided excite our sympathy and sometimes our passions. Much discussion on this subject might, however, broaden the ethical problems concerned very considerably and emphasise the conflict between much accepted medical practice and the faith of millions. It is perhaps fortunate that here faith-healers are numerically few, and that, in serious illness, the resolution of their adherents is more liable to be shaken by the common sense and prejudice of their friends and neighbours than sustained by the ministrations of their pastors.

BERKLEY'S HANDBOOK OF MIDWIFERY. By Arnold Walker, F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. Fourteenth Edition. (Pp. 9 + 411; figures 78; plates 3. 15s.). London : Cassell. 1953.

THIS book is written for pupil midwives and midwives, and the author, as chairman of the Central Midwives' Board and for many years as associate of the late Sir Comyns Berkeley, is the logical successor to carry on this popular handbook.

Like most obstetric books for midwives, it errs in being too long and too detailed, and a valuable opportunity to prune the text and to bring into prominence the essentials of the subject has been lost.

The midwife has a very responsible part to play in any maternity service, and, accordingly, any line of treatment advocated must be essentially explicit and safe. In this respect the advice given to her when left to deal with severe antepartum hæmorrhage, in the absence of medical aid, is, in the reviewer's opinion, dangerous.

Much of the text has been brought well up to date, but an obsolete method of treatment of eclampsia is still detailed, and the most modern lines of treatment are not mentioned.

Despite this, the book reads easily and is well illustrated, and should prove a valuable guide to the midwife. The rules of the Midwives' Board and the Code of Practice are well applied, and the section on the new-born infant by Dr. C. T. Potter has much to commend it.

There is a definite future for this handbook, but its reputation will be further enhanced if future editions are more positive and concise.

M. R.

AIDS TO GYNÆCOLOGY. By W. R. Winterton, M.A., M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. Eleventh Edition. (Pp. 196 + viii; figures 15. 6s.). London : Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1953.

THIS is an excellent book for the purpose for which it is written. While one cannot recommend it as a text-book, there is no doubt that it can be most valuable from the point of view of revision. The text covers the subject as fully as it is possible in a book of this series and all padding has been left out.

One could certainly recommend this book to students to use for revision before an examination.